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## 'Dumping ground': Trump echoes conservative 'Project 2025' at first rally as a felon

U.S. has 'a dysfunctional asylum system,' Democratic lawmaker says



Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump dances upon arrival at a campaign rally at Sunset Park in Las Vegas on Sunday. (Brandon Bell/Getty Images)

By John T. Bennett

Posted June 10, 2024 at 3:45pm

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump dances upon arrival at a campaign rally at Sunset Park in Las Vegas on Sunday. (Brandon Bell/Getty Images)

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Donald Trump used his first rally since his criminal conviction to rail against migrants entering the United States illegally, echoing harsh characterizations in the “Project 2025” policy blueprint for a second term drafted by some of his allies.

The political world was watching the former president and presumptive Republican presidential nominee closely Sunday as he rallied loyalists in sweltering Las Vegas for the first time since a jury in New York found him guilty on 34 counts of falsifying business records. Trump, at an outdoor rally in the desert city with temperatures over 100 degrees, mostly played his hits — but he also dropped clues about a potential second term.

Trump and President Joe Biden are locked in a tight battle nationally and in battleground states such as Nevada. Biden won the Silver State four years ago, capturing 50.06 percent of the vote to Trump’s 47.67 percent. A Beacon Research-Shaw & Company Research [poll](#) conducted for Fox News June 1-3 showed Trump leading there by 5 percentage points; a [RealClearPolitics average](#) of six recent polls put Trump up 5.3 percentage points.

In a throwback to his successful 2016 White House bid, the likely GOP presidential nominee hit one issue harder than others on Sunday: immigration.

“The illegal immigrants are turning [up] at a level that nobody’s ever seen before, they’re fighting our families,” Trump told his sun-bathed loyalists. “They’re totally destroying our Black population, they’re totally destroying our Hispanic population.”

Those were themes he preached repeatedly during his first run for the presidency, but he added a new layer Sunday that was tailored for Nevada, which has a large unionized service industry workforce.

“And you know what else they’re destroying? And for you, it means a little bit less, but it means quite a bit in this state. They’re killing unions. They’re killing unions because the unions are not able to survive,” he contended.

“They’re not able to survive this onslaught, it’s making them impossible. They’ve worked hard, they’ve worked long to get their salaries up a little bit,” Trump said of Nevada unions. “They’re not able to do it.”

Union members made up 12.4 percent of the state’s wage and salaried workers in 2023, according to the Labor Department’s [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), up from 11.3 percent in 2022. That compares with 10 percent nationwide in 2023. Nevada’s union membership rate has trended above the national average each year since 1989, according to BLS data.

Trump’s Sunday immigration remarks were in sync with policy proposals laid out in the “Project 2025” blueprint, the effort by a collaboration of Trump backers and Republican opinion-makers to scope out what a second Trump term might look like. On the whole, the document calls for a substantial expansion in the power of the Executive Office of the President, and it has been decried by Democrats.

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On immigration, the blueprint calls for the Department of Homeland Security to be replaced with a new "stand-alone border and immigration agency at the Cabinet level," with the remaining parts of DHS to be distributed among other departments.

"Illegal immigration should be ended, not mitigated; the border sealed," the document says, accusing "today's progressive left" of seeking "to purge the very concept of the nation-state from the American ethos, no matter how much crime increases or resources drop for schools and hospitals, or wages decrease for the working class."

Trump on Sunday endorsed the anti-immigration policies of one of his favorite global hard-liners.

"The world is laughing at us ... Viktor Orban, the great prime minister of Hungary, strong country, took no illegal aliens. None, zero," Trump said. "But he made a statement the other day, he said ... 'What's going on? The whole world is collapsing,' he said. 'The only thing that's gonna save the world is Donald Trump has to get reelected as president and the whole world is going to be saved.'"

## 'A dumping ground'

In another 2016 throwback, Trump pulled from his suit jacket breast pocket a printout of a poem that is popular in anti-immigration circles. Egged on by the midday crowd, he recited "The Snake," which warns against taking in beings that are unlike oneself. According to Trump, undocumented immigrants entering the U.S. would be the snake, which in the poem gave a woman that took him in "a vicious bite."

"And that's happening at our border. You see, because we're taking in people that are a disaster for our country. So it's all happening at our border. ... And we're not going to let it happen, we're not going to let them ruin our country, we're not going to let them destroy our country," he said. "So Nevada's being turned into a dumping ground, and you are. The whole country is being turned into an absolute dumping ground for what's happening."

Biden last week issued an executive order aimed at limiting migrants' asylum claims at the U.S.-Mexico border and allowing immigration officials to swiftly deport individuals who illegally enter the United States. Trump and other Republicans have criticized the president's move since the new restrictions would only kick in after people entering illegally exceeded 2,500 in a day.

"If an individual chooses not to use our legal pathways, if they choose to come without permission and against the law, they'll be restricted from receiving asylum and staying in the United States," Biden said during June 4 remarks at the White House. "This action will help us to gain control of our border and restore order to the process. This ban will remain in place until the number of people trying to enter illegally is reduced to a level that our system can effectively manage."

Roll Call is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that provides live coverage of the U.S. Capitol and the White House.



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Biden's order came after pressure from Republicans — and some vulnerable Democratic congressional candidates — for him to take action on an issue that resonates with many voters and Congress, after Trump came out against a bipartisan Senate plan.

Sixty-two percent of registered voters said they would support a federal government initiative to deport all migrants who are in the United States illegally, according to a [CBS News-YouGov poll](#) of likely voters conducted June 5-7. Trump has drawn the outrage of Democrats by proposing the largest deportation program in American history, first proposing to use military troops before recently saying local law enforcement entities would take the lead — even though they are under the command of mayors and city and county councils.

The same poll found 70 percent of registered voters supported Biden's border executive order.

"Look, we in the United States have a dysfunctional asylum system. Anyone, anywhere can cross the border, claim asylum, enter the country, and Border Patrol has no emergency authority to limit crossings in the event of a surge. And so that's the gap that the President's executive order is filling," Rep. Ritchie Torres, D-N.Y., told Fox News on Sunday.

"But in the end, an executive order is no substitute for an act of Congress," he added. "Only Congress can fix what is broken in our asylum system."



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